

Dream Kitchen Comes True For Harbor Hospital Dietician

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Society Editor

A woman who dreamed and planned for six years to have the biggest most functional kitchen in the South Bay saw that dream come true this month when the last piece of equipment was delivered to her home-away-from-home, Harbor Hospital.

The woman behind the practical spacious kitchen department of the new hospital facility scheduled to open to the public momentarily is Miss Elizabeth Star, head dietician at the county hospital since 1947.

Like any woman who works with her architect on plans for her new kitchen, Miss Star based those plans on what her experience in her old kitchen taught her she needed.

In the case of the county hospital, the primary need was a centralized facility where food to feed the entire hospital could be assembled in one spot and delivered instantly without any loss in food flavor or temperature. The service she had in mind was one that would simulate that of the airlines—and much of the equipment she chose was based on that used by airlines.

To gather information for the architects, she visited other hospitals, large restaurants, industrial kitchens, and airline facilities.

STREAMLINES SERVICE
Results of those six years of visiting, studying and consulting were a kitchen that not only streamlines service but also cuts costs by eliminating extra personnel required in the decentralized service used in the former hospital facility.

Harbor Hospital is the first government hospital of its size to use a new type of cart which boasts heated and refrigerated compartments which maintains proper temperatures of all food in a meal from the moment it leaves the kitchen until the moment it arrives at the patient's bedside. Twenty meals are accommodated on the thermostatically-controlled cart. To serve the entire hospital in record-time, there are 27 of the mammoth six-wheeled carts.

COLD FOOD PORTIONING
One of the prime requisites of a hospital kitchen, Miss Star pointed out to her architects, is plenty of space for cold food portioning. She needed room for her staff to prepare salads, butter bread, cut vegetables, fix relishes and extras that add color to a meal. By making sure that enough

workers had enough space to be preparing salad for 500 persons at one time, she knew that she needn't worry about greens wilting before they arrived in the wards.

Results is a cold-food portioning area of the kitchen big enough for 24 women to be working in at once. Plans are for a staff of 12 to use the area when the new hospital opens.

Because she serves 14 menus a day to patients on special diets, Miss Star has different refrigerators for different-type diets. Each tray of each refrigerator is removable to facilitate rapid assembling at tray set-up carts at meal-time.

ROTARY OVEN
For hot food there is a rotary oven as big as a kitchen in an ordinary home and a two-decker quick-cooking oven. Several over-sized steam-fed pots large enough

for an adult to crawl into are used to prepare soups, stews and vegetables. A pot which cooks 800 servings of stew at one time has a spigot at the bottom wide enough for vegetables to slide out of.

When cleaning grounds out of the 80 gallon coffee-maker proved to be a time-consuming feat, Miss Star hit upon the idea of putting the grounds in giant muslin bags which could just be lifted out at cleanup time.

To further cut personnel costs by saving labor-time, the dietician chose to use paper plates which can go into the specially-designed garbage disposal. A giant dishwasher takes care of silver, glassware and trays.

Other special equipment includes a pressure-cooker which cooks 250 servings of food at one time and a radar-range capable of baking a

potato in five minutes which is used primarily to warm saran-wrapped foods which must be weighed for special diets before serving.

SPLIT-SECOND TIMING
In a hospital which serves 2,000 meals daily, timing is of utmost importance. Twenty minutes before mealtime

200 plates of cold food are loaded into the special carts, wheeled past the hot foods section where the cook puts the food directly on the patients' plate, and wheeled into the elevator and to the patients' bedside. Six hot foods stations expedite rapid handling.

With the planning behind her and the equipment in and ready to be used, all that remains for Miss Star to do before the new hospital opens for business, is to familiarize her staff with her dream kitchen. That's one job she won't mind.



INSPECTING PRESSURE COOKER in new kitchen of Harbor General Hospital are Dave Gershon, director of public relations, and Miss Elizabeth Star, chief dietician. Cooker is capable of preparing enough vegetables for 250 persons at one time.



SETTING DIAL on radar range is Miss Elizabeth Star, chief dietician, who worked with architects to plan a centralized kitchen for new Harbor Hospital unit which would be capable of handling 2,000 meals a day with minimum waste of time or labor. Range is used primarily to warm special-diet foods which must be weighed before serving.



GIANT MIXER in new hospital kitchen can whip up enough mashed potatoes in one mixing to feed the entire hospital at one fell swoop. Before equipment for new kitchen was ordered, the hospital dietician spent six

years studying kitchens and equipment used by institutions, industries, restaurants, and airlines. Pictured is Mrs. Anne Beeson of Torrance, kitchen worker.



CARTING FOOD from stove to bedside is no problem at Harbor Hospital, where specially-designed six-wheeled carts are equipped with refrigerated area to keep cold foods cold, and warming area to keep hot foods hot. Food is placed on patients' plate at just the right temperature when it reaches bedside. Principle is based on that used in serving food on airlines.



LOADING TRAYS of cold food directly from refrigerator to cart are (l-r) Mrs. Beeson, Miss Star and Mrs. Elsie Smith of Torrance. Wall of kitchen is lined with low refrigerators. Time needed to set up trays is kept to minimum by using refrigerator shelves that can be removed and double as trays at mealtime.